



# UPLIFT Newsletter

The United  
Presbyterian Church  
of Blairsville, PA

AUGUST 2017

It has often been said that the quality of a society can best be judged by the way its most vulnerable are treated. That group would include those who have no one to advocate for them or offer protection. Those named in scripture are widows, children, those challenged in basic daily activities, the sojourner (the stranger who is passing through our community). To be sure, that list is much longer as we look at the needs of those around us. As the God of justice, the Lord has little patience for those who take advantage of others. In righteousness he decrees, "You shall not wrong a sojourner or oppress him, for you were sojourners in the Land of Egypt. You shall not mistreat any widow or fatherless child. If you do mistreat them, and they cry out to me, I will hear their cry, and my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children fatherless." (Exodus 22:21-24) That Old Testament justice is harsh. But Jesus is no softer in his approach. Matthew, Mark and Luke record the warning issued to those who harm a child. "If anyone causes one of these little ones to stumble, it would be better for them if a large millstone were hung around their neck and they were thrown into the sea." (Mark 9:42)

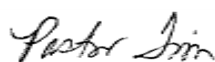
We would all agree that any form of abuse is sinful. But we need to remember that just as bad as a sin of commission is a sin of omission. That means its not just the evil we do that is wrong, its also the good we fail to do that is just as bad. Edmond Burke said, "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." Silence is not golden when it means wrongs are not addressed.

Each time a child is baptized and welcomed into the community of faith, the congregation takes a vow to God and makes a promise to the child and parents that they will do everything in their power to be a model of faithful living and a nurturer of a safe and healthy environment. In some traditions, individuals take on the role of godparent, but in our tradition that responsibility is assumed by the congregation in the name of the whole church of Jesus Christ. In the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, there are those who have a legal obligation to report any abuse they are made aware of—school employees, health care workers, child care providers, clergy, funeral directors, social service workers, public library personnel, independent contractors, law enforcement, attorneys and others. Within the Presbyterian Church, we raise that standard even higher. All churches are required to have child protection policies. Teachers and anyone working with children are required to have background checks. Every effort is made to have at least two adults present in a classroom. Not only are ministers mandated reporters, but so too those who have been ordained as elders and deacons (whether actively serving or not) are "required to report to ecclesiastical (church) and civil legal authorities knowledge of harm or risk of harm, related to the physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity..." (Form of Government 4.0302)

As a church, we take that responsibility very seriously. In the past, we have offered training to our leaders and those from other churches. At our most recent, we had over 90 in attendance. Two ministers from our Presbytery have been certified as trainers and are offering their services to help church workers be faithful in their responsibilities. We will hold a training event in the Fellowship Hall on Thursday, August 17th from 6:00-9:00 p.m. There is no charge for the training, but we do ask that you call the church office to register so we are sure to have enough workbooks for everyone. This is open to anyone from any church or community organization who works with children and adults who are challenged. It will guide you in what to look for and what to do if you encounter any form of abuse.

Whenever I go through the town of Ernest, north of Indiana, I see the sign: "We have many children, but none to spare." Seeing the sign, I slow down and am all the watchful. "Then some children were brought to Jesus so that he might lay hands on them and pray. And he said 'Do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these.'" .....

In Christ's love,



## **We Are a Connected Church**

Presbyterian Church (USA)  
(whose office is in Louisville, KY)  
16 Synods made up of  
170 Presbyteries  
1,571,423 members in  
9,636 congregations

## **Scripture Texts for Worship**

The scripture texts for August are given for your study in preparation for Worship.

### **Sunday, August 6**

Romans 9:1-5  
Matthew 14:13-21

### **Sunday, August 13**

Romans 10:5-15  
Matthew 14:22-33

### **Sunday, August 20**

Romans 11:1-2, 29-32  
Matthew 15:(10-20) 21-28

### **Sunday, August 27**

Romans 12:1-8  
Matthew 16:13-20

### **Sunday, September 3**

Romans 12:9-21  
Matthew 16:21-28

## **September Newsletter**

Articles to be published in the September edition of the UP-LIFT newsletter are due to the church office by Tuesday, August 15th. Please have all information to the church office by this date.

## **Food Bank**

Food items are distributed between the hours of 12:00 and 1:00 the first Tuesday of each month. Proof of residence is needed when signing-up for the first time. The food bank is sponsored by ICCAP.

## **Worship Assistants**

### **August 6**

Liturgist: Mary Anzelone  
Flowers: Naomi Sigafoes  
Music: Betsy Holby  
Ushers: Tom & Julia Holby  
Bob & Diane Hanna  
Projector: Blake Tonkin  
Audio: Elizabeth Bruner

### **August 13**

Liturgist: Bobbi Monroe  
Flowers: Jeff & Rose Lewis  
Flowers: Bill & Deb Lint  
Music: Adam Loucks  
Ushers: Terry & Barb Brown  
Brent & Tammy Ritchie  
Projector: Shakira McKinney  
Audio: Jaison McKinney

### **August 20**

Flowers: Rick & Willa Shoemaker  
Ushers: The Baker Family  
Projector: Alex Kirkland  
Audio: Andrew Baker

### **August 27**

Flowers: Ed Bence  
Ushers: Bill & Vicky Westley  
Tony & Amy Yackuboskey  
Projector: Kayla Moran  
Audio: Tyler Moran

### **Offering Counters**

Joanne Torrance & Naomi Sigafoes

## **Back to School Bash**

The Indiana County Back to School Bash will be held Saturday, August 19th from 9:00 am—12:30 pm in downtown Indiana Church Street.

## **The Rwanda Experience**

Trinity Presbyterian Church in Clarksburg will host our friends from Rwanda, Celestin Nsengimana and Rose Marie Ibyashada & her husband Gabrielle as guest speakers September 12, 2017 from 2:00—5:00 p.m. Dinner will follow the presentation. Please register with the Presbytery office at 724-783-7196 by September 4th if you plan to attend.

## **VBS Offering**

Each evening at Vacation Bible School an offering was received for a specific mission project. This year the offering was received for "Living Waters of the World," a global ministry that provides sustainable clean water and fosters long-term mutually beneficial relationships between volunteers and communities in need. This year the kids gave a total of \$485.30 for this ministry.

## **Christian Ed Update**

The Christian Ed Committee met and set some dates for you to remember.

- ⇒ A Sunday School Kick-Off Breakfast will be held Sunday, September 10th at 9:45 a.m.
- ⇒ The first day of Sunday School will be September 17th at 9:45 a.m.

If you have any questions, please see Nancy Hartmann or Kim McKinney.

## **Choir News**

All those interested in being part of the choir and those who already are, a Choir Picnic will be held Sunday, August 27th at the Borbonus Farm. Swimming and visiting will begin at 3:00 and the meal will be served at 5:00 pm. Please bring a dish to share. Also, choir rehearsals will begin Wednesday, September 6th at 7:00 p.m.

## VBS was Cool!! .....A letter of thanks

Music was amazing. The River was cool, so was We Believe. But I liked Drops in the Ocean the best. The food was great! My favorite part of Bible School though was arts and crafts. I think that this year's Bible School was Amazing!!

From Brennan Borbonus

I liked when we played games. I liked when you put the hoola hoop down and we threw the flying bean bags.

From Ewan Borbonus

I loved arts and crafts this year. We had lots of awesome crafts! My favorite was painting the boat. I loved traveling to different countries to find out about what different people do with such little water! I had a great year!

From Eli Borbonus

We are grateful for the Bible School program. It is always a highlight of our summer vacation. We are aware of how much time, effort and money are required to host the VBS and are thankful to all of the church volunteers and employees that make it possible!

Sincerely, Marty & Sheila Borbonus



A lot has happened in the past 300 years. The US was founded. A man walked on the moon. A terrorist strike on 9/11/2001, changed the world. And through it all, Presbyterians have been there every step of the way. They were signers of the Declaration of Independence (12 total), an astronaut on Apollo 11 (Buzz Aldrin) and experienced loss when the country was attacked. The Presbyterian Church has also experienced many peaks and valleys in the past three centuries. The 1st General Assembly was held in Philadelphia in 1789. The 1st foreign missionary sailed to Liberia in 1833. The largest American Presbyterian denominations reunited after 122 years, forming the PC(USA) in 1983. The history of the Presbyterian Church got its start in Philadelphia where the first presbytery and synod were formed. Consisting of 17 ministers and a territory from Long Island to Virginia, the first synod met for the initial time on September 17, 1717 in Philadelphia, and consisted of presbyteries from Philadelphia, New Castle, Snow Hill and Long Island.

The Synod today covers all of PA, all of WV except for the eastern panhandle and the counties of eastern OH generally known as the Upper Ohio Valley. Currently, 16 presbyteries make up the Synod of the Trinity, and these "mid-council offices" serve 1,094 churches and 160,509 Presbyterians, making the Synod of the Trinity not only the oldest but also one of the largest in the Presbyterian Church (USA). *Excerpts by Mike Givler*

## Mandated Reporter Training Scheduled

This 3-hour workshop will provide you with the required training in a format that will make sense to your situation as a church **Elder, Deacon, VBS volunteer, Sunday School teacher/helper, staff or Pastor**. You will receive a certificate upon completion of the workshop. Provided FREE by the Presbytery of Kiskiminetas, with local pastors as workshop leaders, we encourage you to sign up soon to complete your once-every-5-year training. This training is eligible for Act 31, Act 48 (Act 126) credits.

Thursday, August 17 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Register with Jill at 724-459-7991 or [upchurch@r-church.com](mailto:upchurch@r-church.com)

## Fellowship Opportunities

### What's in the box?

On October 21st, we will be joining in the Fellowship Hall to bake cookies and package them up for College Students and Military Service Personal. We need suggested names to mail packages to... and we need volunteers to add the love and help bake and package up the boxes.

### Baking the Bread

Join us on September 30 for a Bread Baking Class. The bread will be served with World Wide Communion on Sunday and at a Soup Luncheon following church on Sunday, October 1<sup>st</sup>.

### Calendar Party

October 28th, we are planning a Calendar Party. We will be setting up tables for each month, and you will sit with people who were born in the same month as you. We need volunteers to decorate one table with a theme for that month.

Please see Nancy Hartmann or Elaine Jellison if you are interested in any of these events.

